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DOCTORAL DISERTATION

- SUMMARY -

LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL CREATIVE ACTIVITY

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KEY WORDS

Organizational Leadership, Organizational Performance, Creative Leadership, Organizational Creativity, Organizational Change, Ideas Generation, Creative Leader, Creative Process, Organizational Creative Climate.

INTRODUCTION

We start this research with the belief that this will contribute significantly to raising organizational performance, at least nationally. Only a critical assessment of the current situation in Romanian organizations, combined with rapid changes and directions that are seen into the international organizational sphere, may draw some connections to be established to maximize local performance. This is imperative, and for that local organizations must adopt a positive approach to maximizing performance, given the competition with major players in the international arena.

Delimitation and Motivation of Research Thematic

The contemporary society is characterized by a dynamic economic complexity noticed in all existential areas that form it. In this mechanism, human creativity is considered to be a fundamental factor on which is based the societal progress. Therefore we have proposed in this research to identify the role and the creativity's relationships with organizational sphere in its complexity. We therefore introduce in the analysis all that is included in this sphere, from actors to climate, from skills to attitudes and approaches, from objectives to results etc.

Although we admit that all aspects involved in the organizational sphere is in some way under the impact of creativity factor, we consider that the influence of organizational management act directly on the performance of organization members and indirectly on their behaviors to excel in their professional activity. So that should include in the evaluation the existing relationship between creativity and *leading* function of organizational management.

We'll have to see how much attention it is given to this, and how organizational actors can cultivate creativity.

Especially, the societal progress of the last century was due mainly to creativity applied in the economic sphere. The economy has produced welfare, which led to economic competition, which in turn was supported by laborious work in research area, and the number of implications is simply highly branched. All this process was ultimately the fruit of human creativity which generated the process and maintains it.

According to Daniel Pink (2006), the period our society is passing is not only one of information, as we often have been told, but its development is being realized into an inter-conceptual manner. Knowing this aspect, Brown (2009) is underlying the fact that what we call today a creative thinking, where both left side and right side of human brain are working together, it becomes a necessity in surviving. The vision of Carl Rogers (1970) according to which the natural creative adaptation seems to be the only way by which man can keep up with changing its kaleidoscopic world. The main idea that emerges here points out that due to high rates of progress in all fields: science, technology, culture, individuals with low or limited creativity will not effectively solve the problems they face.

So the new creative ideas that have generated new economic paradigm, new activities and can even speak of new reflexes that are among the factors, which are often changing the economic arrangement. Many times is found in the specialty literature *the idea or principle that creativity has become an imperative necessity in achieving performance for contemporary organizations*, whether establishing such performance shall be construed as reaching a certain financial threshold, making new products or services, gaining valuable human resources, organizational change to achieve competitiveness, sustainability etc.

We start this research motivated by the interest mentioned in the above principle that proved to be one of maximum intensity mainly because the reason of very existence and activation of organization on economical stage is to achieve performances established in conjunction with the ongoing competitiveness. Therefore, organizations are forced to accept this challenge and support this economic approach, given by the unprecedented increasing economic context in which they operate, both on domestic market, but especially on the international one. Today, organizations in any industry need skilled leaders with vision and safe approach in their actions. They have to apply methods that are more efficient as before,

to implement strong social relationships, to create ways to increase their influence, feeling even more pressed in identifying, cultivating and enriching creativity, attaching to it the label essential expertise used in developing measurable solutions to the most pressing issues that organizations are facing.

The coexistence in the contemporary society of multitude types of leadership makes this concept be a timeless research topic. This is due to close relationship between the organizational leader and the current economic context, context that currently crosses a rapid and profound transformation, thus modifying reflexes and guidelines. The search for a leadership slim model, flexible and adaptable to new organizational context is similar with caving in raw rock with the desire of the artist to uncover the desired image. To identify this minimalist image of the leader is necessary to start from the maximalist form of the leadership concept. Only such an approach will bring light over the peculiarities needed by the contemporary leader in the contemporary economic context characterized by complexity and dynamism.

This could affect inherently the relevant contextual factors, including those terms that refer to fact that social level of influences could be different, the area's significant characteristics are different, and therefore creativity may have different influences. Even in academic area there has been notices a growing interest for this valuable competence, the creativity, being such developed various theories, models and studies, at individual and organizational level. We include these contributions hoping that they will be useful and supportive for practitioners, but also in order to help in adaptability and development of the business environment. Therefore, creative approach in conjunction with organizational leadership can take the form of a solution in achieving performance or excellence in organizations.

Background to research and statement of problem

Returning to the field of organizational actors, we noticed a real confusion that exists in this area, probably due mainly to the novelty of concepts emerged in recent years in autochthones organizational field. Management and leadership are two concepts used both in academic and in practice areas, often used interchangeably to describe someone who is leading. In reality, these concepts have different meanings, characteristics and distinct activities, but they also overlap or have intersection points. For example, Armstrong said that to be an outstanding manager, you must understand that it takes to be an exceptional leader (Armstrong, 2006).

The comparative approach of the two concepts has been the subject of many existing researches in this area. However one of the first representative researches in the area it is noticed those made by Zaleznik (1977) is highlighting the differences between the concepts, and those made by Kotter (1990) highlighting the complementarities of the concepts. More recently we mention those made by Yulk and Lepsinger (2005) where the interdependence of the concepts is being studied.

Of course, the tendency of a comparative approach for the concepts has crystallized due to the contributions made by well-known theorists in the field as Bernard (1948), Drucker (1954), Bennis (1985), Covey (1989), Giddens (1991), and Hall (1996). Due to major changes in the organizational context and to the organizational actor's tendency of changing identity, the research on this theme was continued by Sveningsson and Alvansson (2003), Gosling and Mintzberg (2003), Ford (2006), Northouse (2007), Carroll and Lester (2008), and Bennis (2009). Due to shortages of this approach in Romanian literature, the subject being discussed predominantly only in books and materials used in educational institutions (Mihuț et al., 2003, Zlata, 2004, Popa, 2005, Preda, 2006; Ilies et al., 2008; Burciu et al., 2008), we believe that through our research we can contribute greatly to the enrichment of field's literature. Thus, during this research we try to draw a distinguishing line between the concepts mentioned.

Although there are well-established certain typologies and theories of organizational leadership, on which our current research is based on them, due to ongoing organizational changes, new factors have to be taking into consideration in order to reach a correct and accurate evaluation over the concept of leadership. So, strictly speaking about the concept of leadership, the researchers have emerged since 1869 by the writings of Galton who first raised into debate the necessary traits of leadership effectiveness. The study on this perspective has been enriched by the researches carried out by Bird (1940), Stewart (1963) and Stogdill (1974).

The concept of leadership has been shaped also by the elaboration of behavioral theories to which have contributed the researches done by Ohio State University (1945), Likert, Lewin, Blake and Moulton (1979) and Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1973). Discussing the concept of situational leadership with the situational variables, has led to the elaboration of situational theories by Fiedler (1967), Hersey and Blanchard (1969), and in the early 70's by Evans and House. The elaboration of situational theories of leadership have contributed to the

development of charismatic leadership theory, and most recently to what is known today in the field literature as being called transformational theory (Burns, 1978, Bass 1985, Bass & Avolio, 1994).

After 2000, in field literature there is noticed an increasing interest for this concept by the diversity of leadership forms emerged as the correlation between different variables and contextual factors with these theories of leadership. From the most representative of those researches brought to the field we have to mention those made by Schein (1992), who brings into debate the organizational culture and leadership, the research of Adair (2002) referring to the use of leadership to motivate subordinates, Yulk (2002) and Armstrong (2006), who correlate the organizational leadership with organizational performance. In addition we mention the contribution of Kotter (1996), Lucia (1997), Tichy (2002), Hickman and Couto (2006), who are emphasizing the importance of leadership in implementing change.

Of course the field literature is very rich in regard with the relations established between the leadership and the multitude of existing variables in this area. Our contribution in studying this concept will result in an exposure of the existing correlations between different evaluation criteria, but also through a fragmentation of perspectives so that the leadership can be analyzed both in organizational and individual context, and also in relationship to individual standards of the same category of activities. This will bring into debate the raised tensions mentioned, mainly between community and individual, between general and particular etc., an aspect that will determine to include into the research all perspectives in order to provide accurate analysis of the leadership from the perspective of creativity. Although generalization remains at the level of some criteria, it seems that common ground that these theorists agree on is gradually, day by day, becoming smaller.

Looking at organizational creativity, the existing field literature in this area is noted to be very rich at the international level. Although started in 1950 by the researchers conducted by Guilford, the study over creativity has been enriched by a massive and rapid progress. Among the most representative are those made by Rhodes (1961), Kanter (1988), Henry (1991), that define organizational creativity through four main elements, then those researches conducted by Ford (1996), Fleith (2000), West (2002), Basadur (2004), Plucker et al. (2004), Shalley and Zhou (2008), West and Richter (2008), Iba (2010), researches that in some way help define organizational creativity. To be noted that the researchers conducted by Sternberg and Lubart (2004), are bringing into debate the theory of investment in creativity. A remarkable

contribution to the field literature is the research conducted by Amabile et al. (1996), who elaborated the theory of organizational creativity components, and also the contribution made by Amabile (1997), Amabile and Muller (2008), Amabile and Khair (2008), by studying the impact of organizational climate on creativity. In addition to the researches mentioned, many theorists and researchers have recognized the importance of organizational climate in generating creativity. We mention here researches by Ekvall (1996), Simonton (1984, 1988, 1994), Smith (1990), Swailes (2000), Oliver (2002), and O'Hara Sternberg (2004), Leavy (2005), Shalley (2008), Mayfield and Mayfield (2010).

Regarding the issue of organizational creativity and organizational climate impact on it, we noticed in the Romanian field literature a lack of studies, which lead us to contribute to its development through this research. Among researchers who contribute to autochthon literature in this field of research, we noticed the researches of Mihuț (1989), Rosca (1981), Thomas and Dimitriu (2008), Sonea Câmpeanu, et al. (2010, 2011), and those made by Roco (2007) and Smith (2007), which correlates creativity with the psychology. At national level, the approach to the organizational creativity has been found in organizational management books used in universities, books mentioned above, but the presentation is more in a general form and less volume of information.

The theme of this paper proposes to address the relationship between leadership and creativity in the organizational context to achieve organizational performance. More specifically, we aim to promote formation of organizational climate created by applying an appropriate leadership style. In the field literature this relationship is found in creative organizational leadership. Even if it is a newer form of organizational leadership, the preoccupation for the research is notable in the contributions brought by different researchers, such as Mumford et al., (2002), Sternberg et al., (2003), Reiter-Palmon and Illies (2004), Sawyer (2006), Martin (2007), Puccio, Murdock and Mance (2007), Tierney (2008), Harris (2009), IBM (2010), Robinson (2011), etc.

Currently, autochthon field literature brings into debate a less specific approach addressing this relationship. Predominantly there is found researches on leadership styles and emotional intelligence, such as those by Fodor (2009), studies that bring into debate the relationship between leadership and organizational change, like the one by Rotariu (2007), Nastase (2009), Mândruleanu (2010), Sonea Câmpeanu, et al. (2011). Therefore we consider it is

necessary to start an extensive research through which to attempt to draw some guidelines having a theoretical and practical applicability characteristic.

We support the idea that a current inventory of theories, techniques and tools exposed through a scientific research, can be of a great use for both the knowledge development in Romanian scientific field, but also in the management and the administration of organizations operating in today's business environment. This is especially given by the fact that Romanian organizations are in tough competition at a global economic context, and knowledge of the international scene complexity is imperative.

Defining the Research Objectives

We specify that through this paper we attempt to clarify a number of issues that are real challenges both in theory and in practice. Given the complexity and magnitude of the research, we follow closely the logic of research methodology, subject to this time to establishing research objectives.

The main objective of this research is to determine the influence of various leadership styles practiced in organizations to form a creative climate, but also to diagnose the state of Romanian organizational creative climate.

In this way we want achieve both a theoretical research on organizational leadership style, but also an empirical quantitative empirical research based on the questionnaire technique on a sample of organizations from the north-western Romania. The questionnaire chose to be used is a tool developed by Teresa M. Amabile¹, known in the field literature as the KEYS, a scientifically validated questionnaire. This instrument was designed to provide a clear picture of organizational climate for creativity and innovation (Amabile, 2009).

Derived from the main objective, in this research we will follow a series of *secondary objectives*. Because we believe that the realization of this research is both a necessity and a benefit, for both academic and for the practice spheres, we allowed ourselves to divide the series of objectives into two secondary objectives as follows:

¹Teresa M. Amabile, PhD – Harvard Business School, USA;

A. Theoretical Objectives

1. Making a conceptual and a theoretical delimitation between organizational management and leadership organizational concept. We will try to establish the role of each process within organizations, find the existing correlations between the two, but also the usefulness of each to achieve performance;
2. Approaching creativity in organizations as influential factor on the process of organizational leadership by identifying its components, influences, environmental implications and the benefits of it over the business arena, all determined by the complexity of the current economic context;
3. Identification of organizational leadership styles that shape the organizational situation due to the complexity of the economic context. To achieve this objective we will make filter the existing leadership theories in the field literature, using a theoretical instrumentation;
4. Establishing the relationships between leadership styles and creativity needed to achieve organizational performance as a result of leadership, and organizational change as organizational performance.

B. Practical Objectives

1. Evaluation of existing creativity level in Romanian organizations through empirical research that outlines the dimensions of creative climate;
2. Comparison of the links that are formed between the dimensions of a favorable climate to creativity and size of the organization, the function and management level on which is the leader, its type and professional experience. To achieve this we will use statistical descriptive analysis in studying the quantitative variables included in the empirical study;
3. Establishing the correlations formed between the variables of the study, named by KEYS and the dimensions that determine a creative climate in organizations, in attempt to determine how some variables influence others,

and eventually to suggest possible causal relationship between them. To achieve this we will use inferential statistical analysis;

4. Making a comparison between the values obtained in the sample given by U.S. validation of the questionnaire with the values recorded in KEYS questionnaire used in our research organizations.

As we mentioned, we believe that the research results will contribute significantly to complete the picture existing in the field literature regarding the relationship between organizational leadership, creativity and performance in organizations. In addition to this, we believe that empirical research included in the paper, will bring added value to the topic being studied at the national level, because it seems to be the first attempt to put into practice the KEYS's instrument. Identifying strengths and weaknesses of the Romanian organizational climates can contribute and can serve as vital information for Romanian managers aiming to improving the behavior adopted in leading organizations. This will lead to achieving the performance and to the formation of a constructive competitiveness in the given activity field.

Being aware at the thematic of the research has a multidisciplinary approach, with a dominant keynote in economic-organizational sphere; we highlight the impossibility to have a fully comprehensive research. In one of his researches, Galle (1955) states: "Leadership seems to be, like power, essentially a highly contested concept." But in his work, Robinson (2011) highlights the following: „the role of a creative leader is not to have all the ideas, but to create a culture in which all individuals can have ideas and feel they have been valued. So, it's more about creating climates. I think that means a change for a lot of people. "

A particular interest in this framework will be the given resistance or openness to change of Romanian's organizations. For this we have to integrate elements from different spheres societal connected: politics, psychology, sociology, history etc., thus the research receives by this a multidisciplinary character. We believe that it is impossible today to have a unidisciplinary approach, at least on those subjects who share the human factor, because such an approach leads to impoverished knowledge and poor perspective on reality. Thus the picture of leadership in organizations can be easily correlated with all the other components that formed it and spheres that influence it.

We are convinced that the present research will be further developed, especially given the importance and implications of the relationship between the concepts studied, but the rapid

evolution of thinking and perspectives on the field studied. Multidisciplinary approach requires the completion of the picture surprised by research perspectives from other fields. To achieve this goal it requires a strategic collaboration between various specialists of related disciplines, which will certainly lead to complex results, absolutely necessary to improve the Romanian's organizational performance.

PART I – LITERATURE REVIEW

The thesis is structured in five distinctive chapters. The first four chapters are conceptual - theoretical, forming together the study of domain literature. The fifth chapter aims to expose the applicability of theory by presenting an empirical research. All these chapters are followed by conclusions which will be presenting conclusive results and personal contributions to doctoral research.

In the first chapter, we developed a conceptual framing of doctoral research by achieving a study about the evolution of theoretical thinking on the studied theme. In order to do this, we tried to realize a conceptual separation between the concepts: organizational management and organizational leadership. **The second chapter** discusses the concept of organizational creativity as an influential factor on the organizational leadership. **The third chapter** includes an exposition and analysis of existing theories in literature of organizational leadership. This analysis aims to understand and identify those leadership styles that can contribute in creating a favorable climate in the organization in order to achieve the organizational change and performance. **The fourth chapter** explains the relationships established between various types of leadership, creativity, organizational climate and organizational performance.

PART II – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

Chapter five constitutes the second part of this thesis, in which it is exposed an empirical research on the current status of Romanian organizational climate. We tried to identify the

creativity level determined by managers in expression of their leader role. The research follows an assessment of organizational climate dimensions which are specified in the literature. In order to accomplish the evaluation we used a scientifically validated questionnaire, named KEYS, which is a scientific instrument developed by Teresa M. Amabile, PhD, from Harvard Business School, USA. This instrument was designed to provide a clear picture of organizational climate for creativity and innovation (Amabile, 2009).

1. Establishment of hypotheses and research model

By focusing our attention on the support to foster a creative climate in organizations, we established to test the following hypotheses:

- **H₁:** *In the current economic context, the creativity level of organizational climate is higher in small organizations than in large organization.*
- **H₂:** *Individuals with a higher professional experience have a less favorable perception about creativity and innovation in their organizations.*
- **H₃:** *In Romanian organizations, the male leaders are predominated in management positions, respectively on the top hierarchical levels (top-management).*
- **H₄:** *Increasing the level of creativity and productivity at work is an interdependent action determinate by a direct proportional connection between managerial encouragement, work group support and organizational encouragement.*
- **H₅:** *Creative climate formation is favored by the existence of a strong connection between managerial encouragement and the lack of organizational impediments.*
- **H₆:** *The leaders from the middle hierarchical level (middle management) have a higher and more favorable influence on the formation of a creative climate than those who are on a higher level.*

Based on these assumptions, we utilized in our study, the research model proposed by the Amabile et al. (1996). The research model aims to analyze and to determine the level of organizational creativity, as is shown in Figure no. 1

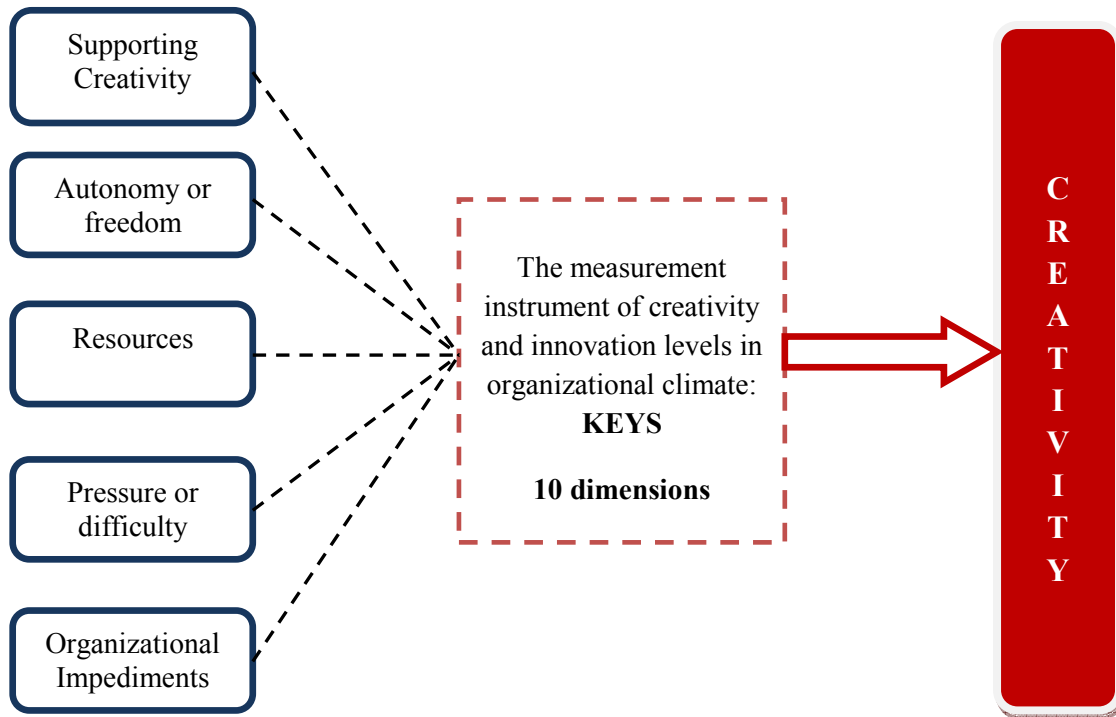


Figure no.1 – The Research Model

Source: (Amabile et. al, 1996: 1159)

To measure these five categories of factors is indicated to use the KEYS instrument. The evaluation of creative climate level is based on 10 determinate dimensions as follows:

- 1. Freedom – 4 items**
- 2. Challenging Work – 5 items**
- 3. Managerial Encouragement – 11 items**
- 4. Work Group Supports – 8 items**
- 5. Organizational Encouragement – 15 items**
- 6. Lack of Organizational Impediments – 12 items**
- 7. Sufficient Resources – 6 items**
- 8. Realistic Workload Pressure – 5 items**
- 9. Productivity – 6 items**
- 10. Creativity – 6 items**

In order to determine the existing level of creativity which is predominantly in Romanian organizational climates, the respondents were asked to evaluate their responses to questions of Keys Questionnaire using the Likert scale type.

2. The subjects and methods used in empirical research

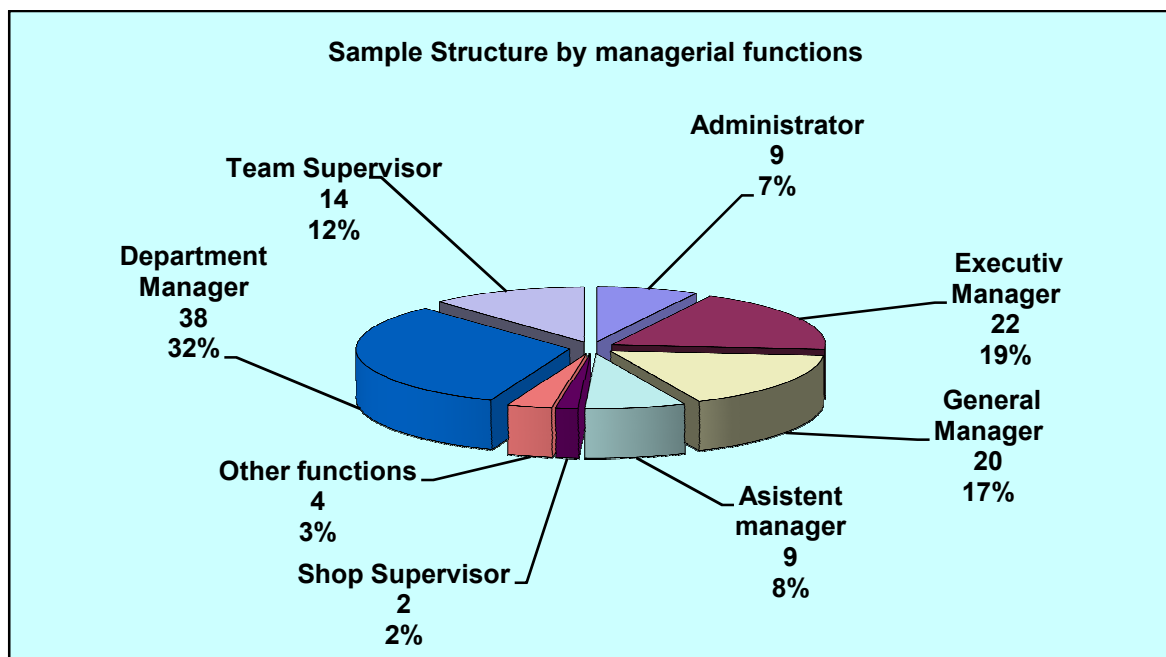
In this empirical research, we decided to evaluate the state of Romanian organizational climate in order to identify the dimension's levels which are favoring the formation of a creative climate, and also, to identify those dimensions which are putting deficiencies for a creative climate. We decided to use the perspective of managers or other individuals which are positioned on one of the managerial hierarchical level, respectively being on a management position, having subordinates and participating actively to the decision making process in the organization. In addition to these features, the individuals included in our research are active in organizations located in northwestern region of Romania, and we referred to those organizations which are passing for legal and active juridical persons (as mentioned in the Report of Activity drafted by the National Office of Trade Register, 2010: 35).

Therefore given the nature of statistical population and the lack of valid, complete and official databases, which should be included the composition of statistical population in a structured and completed way, this empirical research needs to be approached as *a non-probabilistic empirical study* (Serban, 2004). For the establishment of sample we adopted the *snowball sampling technique* (Pop, 2004: 19).

We sought to achieve a sample of 200 individuals, divided proportionally to each county capital of northwest region, videlicet by 33 managers in each capital. In order to do this we have established three managers to contact them directly in each capital. Based on their information and recommendations we included other managers in our research. The chosen research method was based on *questionnaire survey*, as we watched to obtain a high number of questioned managers for our empirical research.

After distributing the questionnaires, we obtained a number of 123 valid questionnaires, which are representing a response rate of 61, 5%. Therefore, our empirical research is based on the investigation of a sample which has in composition 123 individuals with managerial positions. The structure of sample utilized by us in this empirical study can be consulted in

graphic no. 1, where are presented the study participants classified by their managerial functions in organizations:



Graphic no. 1: Structure Diagram of study participants by managerial functions / positions

Consequently, raw data obtained in this sample by applying the KEYS questionnaire, were processed successively using statistical packages named SPSS 17.0 and Office Excel 2007.

3. Testing the Hypothesis and Interpretation of Obtained Results

If we consider our first hypothesis (H_1), we determined that small and medium organizations proven to be more flexible, more creative and more innovative than large organizations. Therefore, hypothesis H_1 is **valid**. Our empirical research revealed that for seven of ten dimensions of creative climate measured with KEYS questionnaire, the small and medium sized organizations obtained higher average scores than large sized organizations.

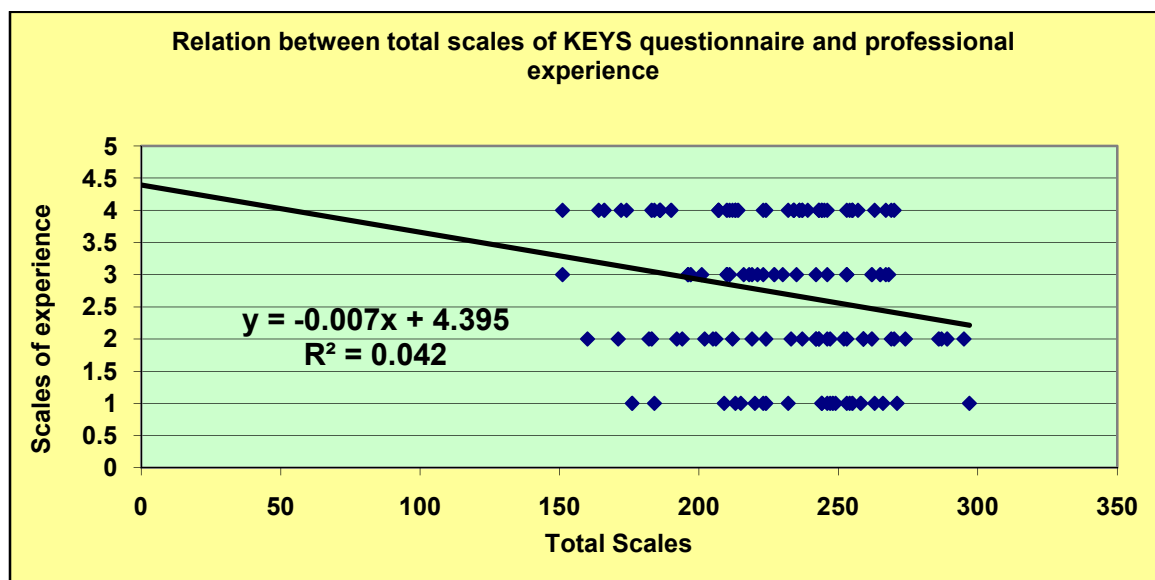
Small and medium sized organizations – The values of average scores

- ✓ Freedom (*Micro-organization – 12.43*)
- ✓ Managerial Encouragement (*Micro-organization – 37.66*)
- ✓ Organizational Encouragement (*Micro-organization – 50.33*)

- ✓ Sufficient Resources (*Small organization – 20.16*)
- ✓ Realistic Workload Pressure (*Micro-organization – 13.76*)
- ✓ Creativity (*Micro-organization – 18.5*)
- ✓ Productivity (*Small organization – 20.3*)

In fact, these values evidence that formation and establishment of a creative climate is more difficult to be achieved. Concurrently, the generation of new ideas and their implementation requires an entrance into a process of change from organizations. The implementation of this process will be difficult in large organizations because its achievement requires a flexible, easily adaptable and open to new ideas organizational climate.

Regarding the second hypothesis (**H₂**), the inferential statistical data shows that a higher professional experience, which is characteristic especially for managers from large organizations, is inversely correlated with some parameters of creativity which were assess by using the KEYS questionnaire. In the same time, graphic no. 2 is presenting the inverse proportionality correlation established between professional experience and total scales of KEYS questionnaire:

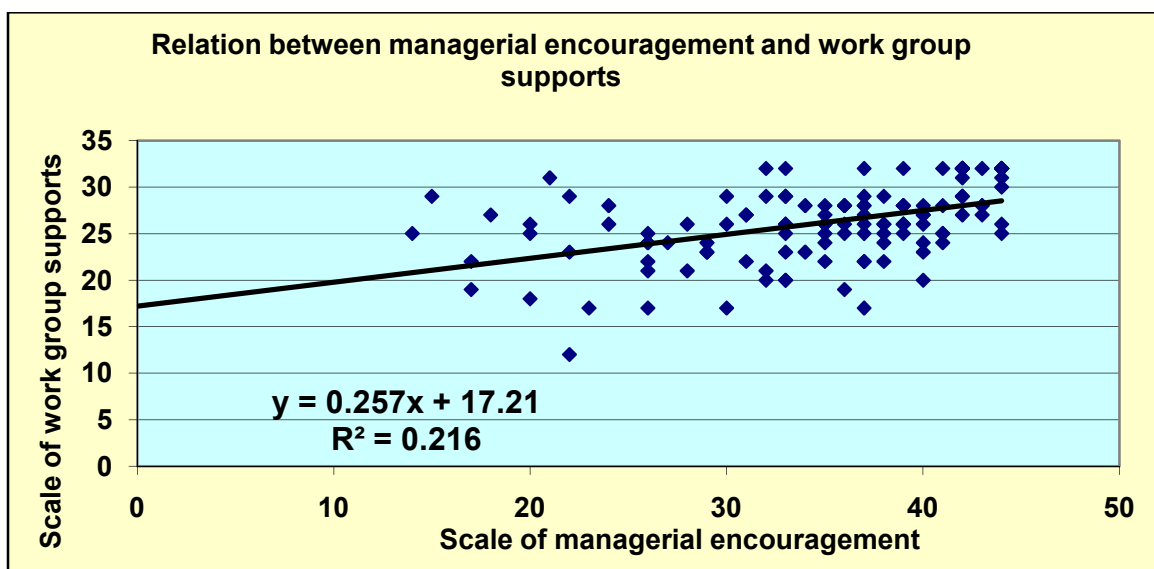


Graphic no. 2: Dispersion Diagram of relation between total scales of KEYS questionnaire and professional experience ($r = - 0,18$, $p = 0,04$)

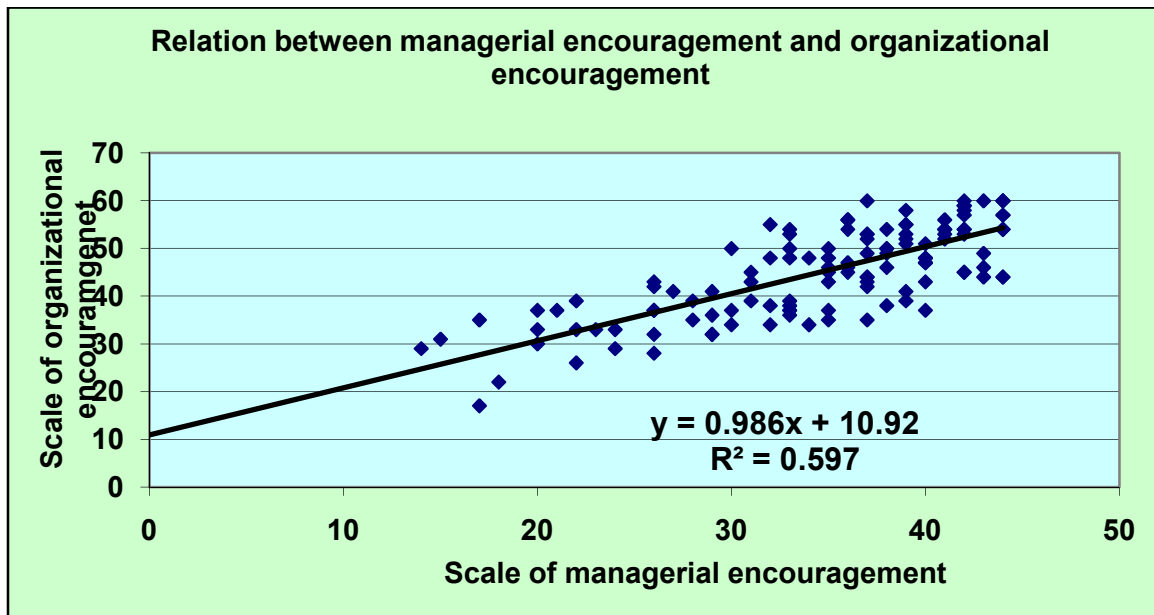
This means that the leaders who have a high professional experience and are in managerial positions will not support the entire organization in fostering a creative climate. In other words, our **second hypothesis is confirmed**. We tend to assume that this aspect is due to sense of prudence which these leaders are having it beside the new ideas and the level of risk which is necessary to be assuming in the implementation process of new ideas.

To test the validity of third hypothesis (**H₃**), we used the χ^2 test. Following the completion of this test, we noticed that within organizations included in our research, the female leaders are predominately on the first-line managerial level, reaching a 64% score, which is visible different from male leaders on this level, who obtained a 36% score. Making the same comparison on the other managerial levels (*middle-management and top-management*) we may observed that there is a very high predominance of male leaders who are on the top managerial positions (70, 83 %). Therefore, **the third hypothesis of this empirical research is validated**.

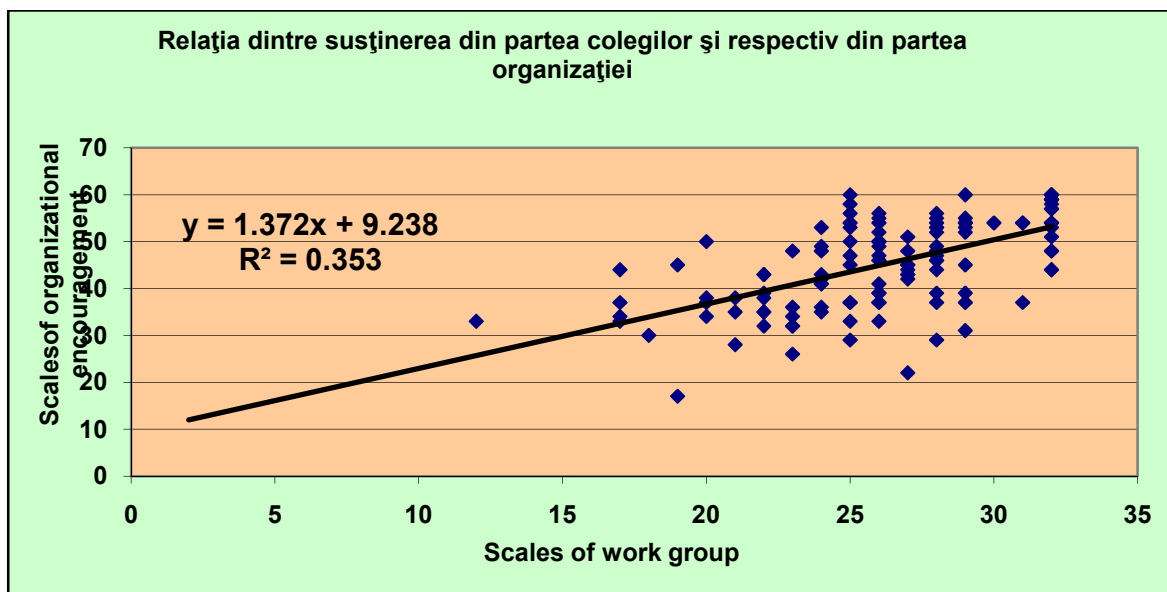
The fourth hypothesis (H₄) set in our empirical study **was confirmed** by the existence of strong and statistically significant correlations, and also by the existence of direct proportional relationship established between there dimensions mentioned in the hypothesis, namely: the managerial encouragement, work group supports and the organizational encouragement. In the following graphics are exposed these correlations:



Graphic no. 3: Dispersion Diagram of relation between managerial encouragement and work group supports. ($r = 0,46$, $p = 0,0000002$).



Graphic no. 4: Dispersion Diagram of relation between managerial encouragement and organizational encouragement ($r=0,77$, $p=0,0000002$)



Graphic no. 5: Dispersion Diagram of relation between work group supports dimension and organizational encouragement dimension ($r = 0,59$, $p = 0,0000002$)

We want to mention that these three dimensions are also very strong correlated with creativity and productivity dimensions, and implicit with total scales of KEYS questionnaire, therefore the validation of this fourth hypothesis is permitted.

To test the fifth hypothesis (H_5), we achieved a descendent ranking of Pearson linear correlation coefficient “ r ” and the values of “ p ” which were obtained by correlation between

managerial encouragement dimension and the other variables. The values of r and p coefficients which were obtained by relations of association between managerial encouragement and the other variables are shown in the table below.

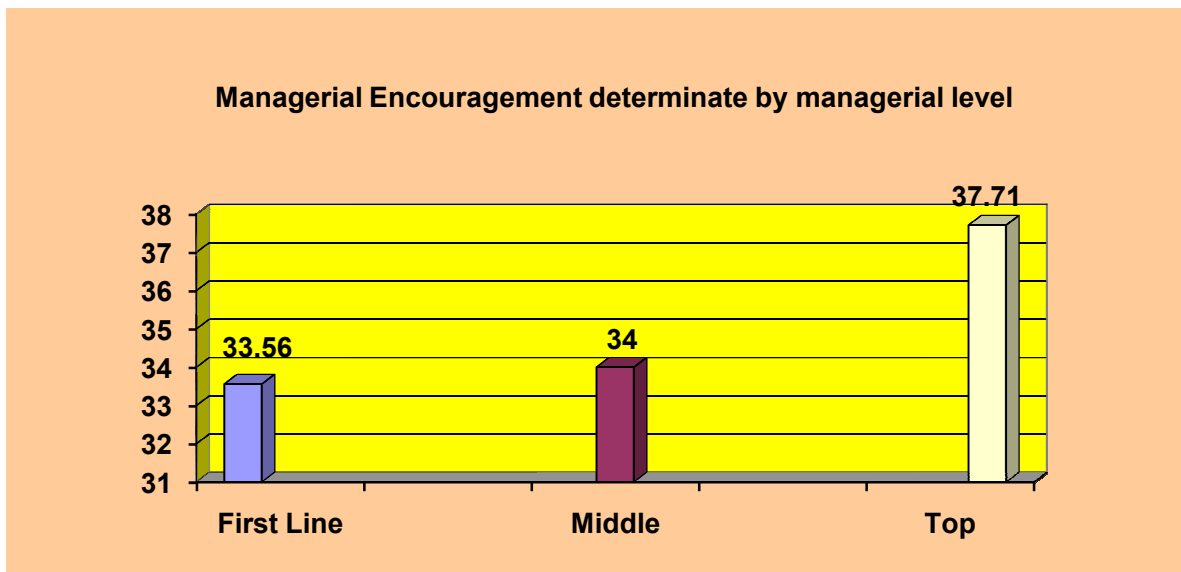
Table no.1: r and p values of the correlation between managerial encouragement and other variables

No.	Correlation between variables	Value of r	Value of p
1	Managerial Encouragement and Organizational Encouragement	0,77	0,0000001
2	Managerial Encouragement and Sufficient Resources	0,62	0,0000001
3	Challenging Work and Managerial Encouragement	0,52	0,0000002
4	Managerial Encouragement and Productivity	0,51	0,0000002
5	Managerial Encouragement and Work Group Supports	0,46	0,0000002
6	Managerial Encouragement and Realistic Workload Pressure	0,45	0,0000002
7	Managerial Encouragement and Creativity	0,30	0,00067
8	Freedom and Managerial Encouragement	0,26	0,0029
9	Managerial Encouragement and Lack of Organizational Impediments	0,23	0,008

It can be easily observed that the formation of a creative climate in organizations is first favored by a direct proportional and strong correlation between managerial encouragement and organizational encouragement, which is followed by seven other strong correlations, and after those, we may identify a direct proportional correlation between managerial encouragement and the lack of organizational impediments. Therefore, we noticed that our **fifth hypothesis (H₅) is partially valid.**

The last hypothesis of our research (H₆) is not confirmed in our case. We conducted a comparison analysis between all ten dimensions which determinates a creative climate in organizations and those three managerial levels (first-line, middle and top management). The

highest values of these dimensions were recorded by the top managerial position, as we can see in graphic no. 6



Graphic no. 6: Comparative Diagram of managerial encouragement scales determinate by managerial level ($p = 0,07$)

This means that leaders from the top managerial level support or favor more the formation of creative climate in organizations comparative with support offered by leaders from the middle and first-line managerial level. At the same time, it was prove that these leaders have a higher interest in supporting the entire organization and have access to sufficient resources. These dimensions are very important in determination of organizational climate creativity.

In international comparative context, our results of this empirical study emphasize that it is not need to feel inferior in relation with one of the largest technological powers of the world, which is highly developed in terms of organization – The United States of America – where the validation of KEYS questionnaire was developed.

The validation sample included a number of subjects ($N=141$), so our sample that we used, is adjacent by USA's validation sample. The comparative dates are exposed in Table no. 2, where we presented the averages of items that favorites the formation of creative climate on American sample, including the highest, middle and lower values of these averages

Table no. 2: Comparative dates between American validation sample of KEYS questionnaire (N=141) and Romanian sample (N=123)

<i>Variables</i>	Item Average on Romanian Sample	Item Average on American sample high level of creativity (Amabile, 1996)	Item Average on American sample - low level of creativity (Amabile, 1996)	Middle Values on American sample
Freedom	2,94	3,10	2,51	2,81
Challenging work	3,30	3,30	2,66	2,98
Managerial Encouragement	3,15	3,10	2,63	2,87
Work Group Supports	3,27	3,34	2,75	3,05
Organizational Encouragement	3,01	2,99	2,38	2,69
Lack of Organizational Impediments	2,44	1,91	2,46	2,19
Sufficient Resources	2,94	2,96	2,65	2,81
Realistic Workload Pressure	2,57	2,40	2,55	2,48
Creativity	2,84	3,09	2,32	2,71
Productivity	3,18	3,22	2,58	2,90

In the table no. 2, we may observed that in American sample with those individuals which are involved in projects with high level of creativity exceed the Romanian individuals only to the scales of freedom, work group supports, creativity and productivity. Instead, the Romanian sample is exceeding the American individuals who work in projects with a low level of creativity, with a small exception of organizational impediments scale which exists in the organizational climate for creativity.

The certainty and value of obtained results in this empirical research, is given by the excellent psychometrics qualities of KEYS questionnaire. On the global and individual dimensions, the values of Cronbach α indices are very good, as we can observe in the content of Table no.3.

Table no. 3: The Cronbach α coefficients of KEYS questionnaire used in empirical research

No.	KEYS Dimensions	Cronbach α	No. of Itemi
1	Freedom	0.45	4
2	Challenging work	0.73	5
3	Managerial Encouragement	0.93	11
4	Work Group Supports	0.89	8
5	Organizational Encouragement	0.94	15
6	Lack of organizational impediments	0.79	12
7	Sufficient resources	0.88	6
8	Realistic Workload Pressure	0.59	5
9	Creativity	0.89	6
10	Productivity	0.91	6
	Total of Questionnaire	0.96	78

Since the Cronbach α coefficients of internal fidelity evaluate the accuracy of variables measurement of the KEYS questionnaire, we confirm that this questionnaire has a good precision of measurement, and the obtained results can not be considered being subjective and superficial impressions of individuals.

We noted the strengths of the investigated organizations. These strengths are referring to: challenging work, the supportive atmosphere provided by colleagues and, also, in a less extent by managerial and organizational encouragement. Consequently, there is a low involvement of manager in his role of organizational leader, which can favorite the formation of organizational climates benefic for creativity. The fact that the attraction for work is recognized because of challenging characteristics, and also, the existence link between colleagues, we consider that these are organizational benefits which are not exploited at the maximum level.

Certainly, we noted, also, the weaknesses which exists inside of participate organizations to our study. The organizational problems were indicated by the individuals who are having managerial positions in these organizations. These problems are referred at: high level of organizational impediments, and also a lack of realistic workload. These results confirm that

there are many deficiencies inside of these organizations in ensuring a climate conducive to creativity. This is due to the imposition of unrealistic working task for individuals; consequently, they become overwhelmed at work, but also maintaining organizational impediments. Therefore we can affirm that the obstacles' in the formation of a creative climate are not a missing in Romanian organizations included in our research. However, at the level of these organizations compared to American sample, creativity and productivity in work recorded a medium to high level.

We consider that the diagnosis of Romanian organizational climates' state and identification of existing problems in order to be solve, determines us to find appropriate solutions in order to ascend to higher level of organizational creativity.

CONCLUSIONS

During our scientific research, we focused our attention towards the achievement of primary objective established in the configuration phase of research project, and also on the achievement of secondary objectives, which were split in theoretical and applicative categories. We mention that there were many moments that have been problematic for the research objectives during this scientific study. Mihaela Roco (2007: 11) affirmed: *The human nature is creative in its origin*. This implies a deepening of a complex domain, which must come under change and evolution, fact that indicate an infinite range of implications. Due to the abstract high level of studied sphere, we resorted to the operational factors to assess accurately the relations between different conceptual elements involved.

The main objective of this thesis was focus on the exposure of influences and implications that are generated by organizational creativity and, also, on the relationship formed between creativity and leadership in organizations. The literature showed very often the idea according to the performance of individuals or organization's excellence will be understand only when we become to know and understand how they invent, explore and create things or new ways (Amabile & Mueller, 2008: 59). We conclude that acceptance and understanding of organizational climate as a crucial factor in increasing the level of creativity will conduct to the achievement of creative performance, and thus to achieve the expectedly results.

Creative leadership is based on the principal of human and inter-conceptual connection, while having a wide range of innovative features. This type of leadership needs time, resources, opportunities and space in order to obtain an excellent interchangeable learning (Harris, 2009: 11). Through this type of leadership proposes a leading model without an evidence of so-called “ego”. Creative leadership is focused and concerned on generating new organizational possibilities which are given by challenges rather than by reproduction. Maintaining the status quo does not express a creative approach. Sooner or later, this approach will eliminate the organizations that practice such institutional policies in contemporary competition. The final result of creative leadership process will not be a consensual and comfort situation, but it will results in a situation of dialog and creative dissonance that requires abandonment of previous thinking and dealing with new beliefs, approaches and models of action which are belonging to creative thinking.

PERSONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE

The scientific papers and specialized empirical studies that deal with the problems of creative organizational leadership as well as the creativity within organizations, especially at a national level, are extremely rare. The interest we offered to this theme of research has resulted both in specialized literature (Mureşan et. al., 2010; Câmpeanu-Sonea et. al., 2011, Câmpeanu-Sonea et. al., 2010, Gabor-Supuran et al., 2010, Borza et al. 2010_a; Borza et al., 2010_b) as well as research reports prepared to support this study. We believe that the realization of this study contributes significantly to the development of knowledge in the field through our personal contribution, structured on two main directions of scientific research:

1. Theoretical and Conceptual Approaches

- *Defining and clarifying some basic concepts on organizational leadership*

Beginning with the statements made by Gosling and Mintzberg (2003): “*Separating management from leadership is dangerous. Just as management without leadership encourages a style of leading without inspiration, in the same way, leadership without management generates a disconnected style of leading*” we still wanted to identify the scope

of each of the concepts, through making the inventory of their defining elements, their characteristics and particularities.

Thus, in our opinion, management creates the environment for performance through establishing the procedures and systems to facilitate the work, provides specific regulations to achieve objectives and ensures the allocation of resources, paying attention to the cost efficiency. The existence of an efficient management is a guarantee of order and consistency in an organization, elements which in turn, determine key dimensions such as quality and profitability.

On the other side, leadership is a given, as well as a complex process that deals with aspects of organizational, social and personal nature from inside and outside the organization. This process is built around the ability to cope with organizational changes, processes that become more and more necessary for the organization to survive and compete effectively in the current economic context it deals with. We believe therefore that the ratio between change and leadership is a direct proportional one.

The change involves adaptability, creativity, integrity, dynamic, and many other characteristics that outline the portrait of an effective leader. Changes in society, markets, fields, technology etc. force the organizations to develop new strategies and learn new action routes. Most times, the most difficult task of managers in welcoming change is mobilizing people within the organization to adapt to the new working conditions. Here is where leadership intervenes in the management's area, that is, the manager will play his role of leader, as well as apply the function of leading, a function specific to the organizational management. In our opinion, a manager's effectiveness is determined by the achievement of the effectiveness in his leadership role.

Our attention was also directed towards understanding the second term, which represented another subject of our research, namely, the organizational creativity. Conceptualization was achieved by exposing the defining elements of creativity, of the way they are understood inside of an organization and out of desire to see which ones have a greater influence on the level of creativity in the organization. We also tried to provide an image of the theories that determine the applicability of creativity and the connections that are formed between them and the organizational environment. The opinions of many researchers that we included in the present paper, invoked the organizational climate as a key variable of particular importance

that seems to exert a major influence on the creative results in the organization. Considering thus that the formation of a creative organizational climate and the impact it has in achieving a high level of creativity, we brought into discussion different perspectives on it and on thru creative activities that are emerging within it

- *The analysis of organizational leadership theories integrating the organizational creativity factor as an evaluation criteria used in theoretical investigation*

This was done in chapter three of the paper where we presented and analyzed traits theories, behavioral, situational and transformational, addressed in an evolutionary sequence of the organizational thinking. After analyzing the characteristics of these theories, we concluded that the theory of transformational leadership fits best with the creativity factor, a factor that manifests influence on organizational management towards performance. Strengthening this opinion was done especially because of the valuable contributions of prestigious researches in this field, which capture valid connections between transformational leadership and creativity.

For example, the contribution made by Burns (1978) and Bass & Avolio (1990) to this theory, contributed significantly to forming an opinion quite consolidated for persuading this field researchers, a fact that convinced us also to form a personal similar opinion. So now we believe that transformational leaders are efficient when they focus on developing the full potential of others in order to transform them in a positive way. Regarding this, they must express the vision they have and emanate trust so that that their followers could not only follow them because of getting a reward or retribution but also because of their desire to follow and identify with them.

On the other hand, the understanding of the image of transformational leadership was shaped by the opinion of Groholt (1993) who states that leadership means *to be* while creativity means *to become*. Thus we understood that for obtaining performance, the organizations need *to become*, that is to stimulate, to develop and utilize creativity through what they *are*, collectively, as an organization and individually, through its leaders. Regarding this aspect, that is *to be*, we reached the conclusion that the organization's leader *can be* in the future what they are not at present through trying to improve the applied leadership style. This perspective offers hope and courage to those that are active in the organizational field or want to access leadership positions.

- *Exposure of the organizational performance as a result of organizational leadership and a theoretical argumentation on organizational change as a form of performance*

This contribution can be observed by the contents of chapter four, which was formed starting with the study of the reason for the existence of organizations. Thus, we came to understand that one of the organization's objectives indicating a high level of importance is the obtaining of performance, specifying here that there are a lot of criteria that can legitimize performance. Yet, our attention was focused on those criteria that can influence the results obtained in terms of quality performance. Understanding leadership as a factor generating organizational performance, we identified and exposed the EFQM model as a tool for measuring the performance resulted from this factor. For achieving such results, we consider it necessary to use unique strategies, innovative and of duration, that use those intangible resources and competencies. Thus, organizational changes play an important role in generating resources and competencies. Consequently, we came to see the organizational performance as a result of the leadership style practiced, and the organizational change is a performance

- *The synthesis of the current economic context' characteristics after evaluating different researches recently conducted in this field*

In the second section of chapter four, we made a synthesis of the current economic context and on what it means to activate as an organization within this context. We considered of a particular importance, the complexity that characterizes the economic context and those actions that can be taken for increasing the organizational performances and hence, the organizational change. We reached the view that the business environment is marked by a series of changes that are manifested on a global scale, these being considered substantial and very different from past experiences

- *The assessment of interdependence between leadership, organizational climate and creativity*

Regarding this relationship, we have focused attention on the process of creative leadership, considering it relevant to our research, precisely because its influence is rated with a higher importance than the managerial tasks, operational or regulatory procedures, adaptation to the changes found in this complex dynamic of the current economic context. For this process, we made a brief conceptualization for clarification, because we considered that such nuances and implications can be better understood in analyzing organizational creativity. We did not miss

presenting the link that forms between a creative climate and leadership process. Basically, the link is reflected in the necessity of having the leadership process on all existing hierarchical levels in the organization with the purpose of constantly influencing creativity and distributing its effect in such a way that it can be felt in the organization's activities.

2. Empirical Research in an Organizational Context

The personal contributions series is materialized in the results obtained through empirical research, a research that was done in the second part of the paper, presented in chapter five.

- *Using a new research instrument within Romanian organizational context, scientifically validated in the empirical researches*

Using an instrument for measuring creativity, we conducted an empirical research on the creative climate existing within Romanian organizations. The measurement tool that we used for this purpose is the one developed at Harvard University, known in the specialized literature under the name KEYS, and which, according to our knowledge, is used for the first time in academic and empirical researches on Romanian organizational context.

- *The evaluation and emphasizing in the Romanian organizational context (the North-West region) of the correlations established between the dimensions that determine an organizational climate favorable to creativity*

With the instrument used, we tried to determine the level of the ten dimensions that draws the organizational climate in the Romanian context, comparing the differences of these dimensions according to the size of the organizations studied, managerial level and in relation to the functions and type of managers interviewed. At the same time, we established and evaluated the positive and negative correlations that are formed between the ten dimensions or variables and which determine the fostering of the creative climate formation and the relationships that are established between professional experience and level of creativity

- *Presenting a comparative analysis between the results obtained from the organizations included in the survey with the scientifically validated standard of the measuring instrument*

Thus, in this empirical research, we conducted a comparative study between the levels of the KEYS dimensions values identified in the climate of Romanian organizations, with the

scientifically validated standard of the measuring tool, KEYS. The purpose of this comparative study is to determine differences from the standard, thus trying to determine appropriate solutions and objectives for each dimension measured. We consider this as an optimal way to develop a creative climate in Romanian organizations.

Along the same line, the empirical research presented in this paper had as general purpose to try to expose some constructive ideas intended to provide a picture that shows some solutions that could be applied within the organizational climate for enhancing creativity and achieving some hoped performances. Following the results obtained by empirical research, we concluded that the work climate contributes in a decisive way to the level of creativity registered within the organizations. Managers at all levels who are considering fostering creativity in their organizations can do it not only by taking into account whom to hire, that is, the personal skills of individuals, but also paying greater attention to organizational climate they want to ensure, with the purpose of total affirmation of individuals with creative potential.

RESEARCH LIMITS AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

Since this work is one of the few researches in the field that uses a new measuring instrument for empirical research conducted at a national level, we know that it can be improved through further research undertaken on creative organizational leadership. Also, we believe that highlighting the limitations of this research is an ethical duty. So, in the next few lines we present **the main limitations** that have influenced the results of the research.

A limit of the research that we have observed refers to errors determined by the answers given by respondents. Various terms used in the questions were not properly understood or evaluated by persons included in the survey. At the same time, we believe that this may be due to transparency or retention in responding especially if the manager is on a lower managerial level, not giving proper attention in completing the questionnaire, and low level of information.

We also experienced a significant percentage of non-responses to questionnaires distributed, thus not all those aimed by the sampling procedure provided answers to the questionnaire that

has been sent to them. Under these conditions, we had to resort to other people who could recommend us to other managers to complete the questionnaire, resulting in increased the time allocated for distributing and collecting questionnaires.

The lack of a complete database of the human resource, framed and structured on management levels, defined at least at the regional level of development, was another limitation in carrying out our research. Because of this, we were forced to use non-probabilistic sampling in determining the volume of respondents that were to be included in research. Establishing the sample through the *snowball method*, practically forced us to periodically check the validity of the data in order to prevent obtaining distorted results that depend a lot on the subjective selection of the persons needed initially for the research. This led to the hindering of the empirical research completion. The intellectual effort put into this was greater, because there was now a need for a continuous and rigorous control of data analysis. Also, the financial effort and time spent for setting the reference channel were a lot more.

By exposing these limitations, and not only, we believe that the research can be extended and we consider it having a significant potential for further scientific study. We argue this position by making some suggestions for future scientific research.

Thus, regarding **the future research perspectives**, it may be considered an extension of the empirical research to the level of a respondents' sample with a wider geographical spread, referring here even to the whole country. We do not consider it a too much bold attempt to try to scientifically the KEYS questionnaire on the Romanian sample so that it could be used in the organizations within our country as a tool for diagnosis and resolution in terms of creative performance in organizations.

On the other hand, we consider beneficial to have an analysis of organizational climates and their level of creativity structured on activity fields with the purpose of determining which of them has a higher level of creativity and could influence the organizational leadership practiced in areas with a lower level of creativity.

Another future research direction that we wanted to expose and that could be shaped starting from the present research, would be an analysis of educational level on organizational creativity within the existent education and training programs as well as specialized schools in Romania. This will have as main objective, identifying the level of necessity for creative

thinking, nationally, linked to the need from the labor market and business environment, for those individuals who have a high degree of creativity. Although the roots of creativity are found in psychology, we consider it a necessity to educate and train future managers, leaders and practitioners in the Romanian business environment on this sphere of creativity by studying it thoroughly. Just as our empirical research indicated, the individuals with less work experience are more creative and enthusiastic about the new, compared with the most experienced; it requires proper training in the management and appropriate use of this creativity.

Being aware that this doctorate paper addresses a research theme fairly new, less explored by Romanian scientists, certainly the research results can contribute significantly to raising the degree of academic understanding and practical application. We are confident that the results obtained following our scientific effort will be the starting points for future researchers, just as this study is a debut in an area quite unexplored in the local organizational field.

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